

represented in the volume belong to the Anglo-Saxon world. We anticipate further initiatives from other countries and cultures.

**Sofia Chatzistefanidou**

University of Crete

Colleen Gray

*No Ordinary School: The Study, 1915–2015.*

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Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015. 184 pp.

In celebration of the school's centenary, the board of governors of Montreal's historic all-girls school, The Study, commissioned historian Colleen Gray to write what would become *No Ordinary School: The Study, 1915–2015*. Gray used as her starting point research by former headmistress Katharine Lamont, and built upon it through archival research, interviews, and secondary source research. Upon completion, the project was presented, not only to “Study Girls” and those connected to the school community, but to all interested in the history of Westmount and Montreal, the history of education, and women's studies (vii). Gray, who has also written on the history of Catholic women teachers in Montreal in *The Congrégation de Notre-Dame, superiors, and the paradox of power, 1693–1796* (2007), drew upon her expertise as a researcher and storyteller to produce an attractive and widely accessible monograph. And if the well-written narrative is not enough to spark interest, *No Ordinary School's* aesthetically pleasing design surely will. The book measures 11 x 9 inches, features full colour throughout, and includes a wide selection of photographs, paintings, excerpts from the *Study Chronicle*—the school newspaper, established shortly after the school's opening—archival documents, and vignettes on school traditions, such as closing services and the school uniform. It is organized into a dozen chapters arranged in chronological eras marked by the school's women principals.

As a reader with no personal connection to The Study, I was surprised by how relevant and engaging I found *No Ordinary School*. The text's narrative runs through the twentieth century, setting the school's history within the broader history of local, Canadian, and international events and trends. Gray's contextualization of The Study in this way allows readers not familiar with the school to enjoy both familiarity and newness in the narrative. One way Gray does this is by evoking broader debates between historians, such as the degree to which the sixties were actually revolutionary, or whether traditionalism in fact prevailed. And then turning to The Study, she demonstrates how, though on the surface the school appeared to continue as always in this era, in fact underneath, experimental education was bursting forth with advances in science, the “new math” curriculum, and new approaches to teaching French. Costs were dramatically rising as well.

*No Ordinary School* begins, prior to the school's official opening in 1915, with the story of its British founder and first headmistress, Margaret Gascoigne. Gascoigne's

experience of education, which took place in her birthplace of England and included attending Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, speaks to her determination to establish a school that would foster fine scholarship and instill the love of learning, two aims which have continued in the school's mission. Gascoigne was particularly interested in the development of character as well as intellect in young women. She herself was described as a woman of "cultivated mind and exquisite taste, sane in her viewpoints, with a lively sense of humour" (10). Her efforts resulted in a deeply rooted academic institution, where many students would find belonging and a sense of identity, and where discipline, structure, and tradition were revered alongside individual development, creativity, and opportunity.

Establishing a school community was crucial to the success of Gascoigne's efforts, and Gray highlights a number of ways in which this was, and continues to be, done. The house system, within the school, and the Study Old Girls' Association for graduates have been key. So too has been celebrating the work of remarkable Study graduates, such as Rhodes Scholars, and other "Great Women," including scientists, architects, artists, and athletes. Celebrated Study women also include beloved former teachers: the chic French teacher of forty-three years, Madame Marcelle Gaudion; Beaver Hall Group artist and Study art teacher of forty-five years, Ethel Seath; or the music teacher of thirty-six years, Ruth Blanchard, who provided a backdrop of classical piano for the girls' school day and Thursday afternoon concerts, to name a few. And then there was the formative and distinctive legacy of each headmistress, such as Mrs. Marshall, who is remembered for the way she cared for students as individuals.

As is expected of a commemorative work, *No Ordinary School* tells a predominantly positive story about the school. And yet, without betraying this aim, Gray offers depth to the narrative by delicately weaving in underlying tensions that have been a challenge for the school. One way she does this is by including comments from interviews, which, while often remaining unnamed, acknowledge that some former students were critical of aspects of the education they received at The Study. Another way Gray does this is by tracking a feature of the school over time, which would become problematic, and then highlighting its resolution. Perhaps the best example of this is The Study's religious and patriotic origins. Rooted in a Christian tradition, the Study, since its inception, has drawn upon the love of learning and pursuit of truth as found in the Anglican tradition. With the school's growing diversity over the course of the twentieth century, however, allegiance to Anglican prayer traditions came to be rejected by many Study members. Rather than discard religion altogether, The Study community was able to find compromise by making religious services interfaith celebrations (149). Another aspect that Gray touches upon in several places is the provision of funds for students who could not otherwise afford to attend The Study. Gray's inclusion of this funding, begun by Gascoigne, and later named the Margaret Gascoigne Bursary in her honour, gives pause to critics of what otherwise appears to be an elite education.

So why was The Study "no ordinary school?" Gray's conclusion, "Into the Future," refers back to the vision of Margaret Gascoigne, for whom school was a way "to foster peace and love throughout the world... in a place where there is no thought

of jealousy or greed or self-seeking” (153). Fundamental to the realization of this has been a supportive community of parents and educators who encourage students toward excellence and provide older students with the opportunity to mentor and support younger students. The continuation of Gascoigne's vision and the success of The Study are ultimately attributed to the uniqueness of each subsequent headmistress, her capacity to leave an enriching legacy behind, and her ability to maintain the homelike community established by the founder.

**K. M. Gemmell**

University of British Columbia

Jon N. Hale

*The Freedom Schools: Student Activists in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement*

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New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. 320 pp.

In *The Freedom Schools: Student Activists in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement*, Jon N. Hale provides a detailed account of the role of grassroots educational experiments in the 1964 Freedom Summer campaign and beyond. Delving deeply into a subject that he rightly points out has too often been marginalized in studies of the civil rights movement at large and in the state, Hale situates the Freedom Schools in the long history of education in Mississippi, describes their founding and operations, connects them to other forms of activism at the time, and traces their impact in subsequent years. In the process he makes three main arguments. First, he asserts that middle and high school students organized protests in small communities around the state during and immediately the Freedom Summer campaign, and that their experience in the Freedom Schools led many of them to activist careers later in life. In addition, Hale demonstrates that education, and the demands for equal access to it and ideas about its potential to liberate, were key components of the civil rights struggle. Finally, Hale traces the Freedom Schools' impact on the development of a “progressive student-centered pedagogy” (13) that continues to influence education scholars and policy debates today. While falling short of proving that the “Freedom Schools constitute one of the most unique legacies of the civil rights movement and, indeed, American History” (14)—a claim that exemplifies an unfortunate hyperbolic or hagiographic tendency that in places mars the book—Hale has addressed a gap in the literature on the movement with a story that is both grounded in the experience of the people and connected to broad themes about how to achieve racial equality.

There are many strengths of this work that make it compelling and provide bountiful food for thought. To begin, Hale contextualizes the Freedom Schools in Mississippi African Americans' long quest for access to education, from Reconstruction era community sacrifices to build schools, to campaigns for equalization and the reaction to *Brown v. Board of Education*, establishing that the goals of organizers in the 1960s did